

Prohibition Travestied



CANADIANA

THE Anti-Drink Crusade

OF THE



PROHIBITION BRIGADE.

DONE INTO RHYME

BY "BUMPUS"

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THE PROHIBITION LEAGUE.

"Dash down that cup of Samian wine,
A race of slaves shall ne'er be mine."

I.

In the region of country that some time ago
King Louis Quatorze christened "arpents of snow,"
There was kicked up of late such a horrible row
As "Canada, the Fair," never dreamt of till now—
In the year '86, with an eighteen before it,
When the social commotion we speak of came o'er it;
And a madness, La Manchean, seized on the people,
Who rang out the tocsin from every steeple,
And loosened the canines that signify war,
Against all the strongholds and tipplers of beer.

II.

For having no likelier work for their vial
Of wrath, since Sir John had extinguished M. Riel,
And hung, drawn, and quartered our noble red foes,
To the utter disgust of the patriot Bleus,
Things were getting too quiet—the horizon fair—
No political tempests obscuring the air;
And Mowat, the plucky, still cock-o'-the-walk,
And Meredith's boastings collapsing in talk,
And the Parliament buildings just put on the stocks,
And the Schools (*sans* the Bible), supplied with new books,
And the Massey assistant requested to stay,
Despite what the bigoted Tories could say;

And the church parties over and done for the season,
 And Joe Cook come and gone with his essay on reason ;
 And the two Sammies off, having finished their job,
 With so much, *per capita*, each in his fob,—
 The sensational view look'd exceedingly blue,
 And the social reformers had nothing to do!
 So the highly philanthropic, generous few,
 Who had always the mob of bad sinners in view,
 Set to fittingly wind up this red-letter year,
 By unbottling their vengeance upon bottled beer!

III.

And in order to accomplish their benevolent intentions,
 The pastors, and their masters, and the people of pretensions,
 Buried their religious and political dissensions,
 And organized a series of anti-rum conventions,
 With a laudable anxiety
 To rectify society,
 In the matter of its XX, and pilsener and beer ;
 For, as models of sobriety,
 And unmitigated piety,
 They could hardly be suspected of taking " whiskey clear."

IV.

And at every such convention,
 For the due prevention
 Of the growth and exportation of our native wine,
 Not excepting that profanely dubbed Augustine,—
 (His Worship vow'd he'd rather meet a rover of Salee,
 Than to his lips, or red or white, put vintage of Pelee)—
 Or the sale and manufacture of such soul-destroying stuff
 As claret, lager beer, or rye, marsala—*quantum suff*—
 Or even apple cider, which was put upon the list,

As a prohibition bar-man said it never would be missed,
 It was duly moved, *nem. dis.*, Mayor Howling in the chair,
 That from henceforth and for ever, in Toronto or elsewhere,
 No drink but *aqua pura*—no stronger should be had
 In hostelry or tavern, to make the lieges glad!
 And should any evil-minded or ill-conditioned sinner,
 Beneath his own mahogany, add small beer to his dinner,
 No matter how, or where, or when, if captured *in flagrante*,
 Or even mother, sister, wife, his brother or his aunty,
 The law would have machinery for reaching such offenders—
 Their state of life be what it might, their ages or their
 genders.

V.

And the Council of the League, after due deliberation,
 Put a motion on their books for some sweeping legislation,
 That would sweep away the lumber of the useless liquor
 laws;

And give 'em *bona fide* pure and simple prohibition,
 Which they prayed for in a very evangelical petition,
 Setting forth in doleful diatribes the goodness of their
 cause,

Requesting of the Government their grave consideration
 Of the dangerous condition of the stomach of the nation,
 Which was suffering from quackery and antiquated bills,
 And an over dose of Scott and Crooks, and Dunkin's liver
 pills.

VI.

And to cure this great disorder,
 And insinuate some order
 Into the epigastric regions of the public reservoir,
 Appolinaris and St. Leon,
 For the bibulous, were fixed on,
 To fill the vacant places of XX and beer.

VII.

But the firm of O. Mowat, and of Hardy and Pardee,
 Not one of which triumvirate was ever on the spree,
 Delivered in full conclave their deliberate opinion
 That the matter should be settled by a vote of the Dominion,
 As the sanitary state of the stomach of the nation
 Was a subject *ultra vires* of Provincial legislation.

VIII.

So the leaguers and crusaders, and all the pious people,
 And the pastors who were quite *au fait* at "cawing from a
 steeple,"
 Besought Sir John to think upon the stomach of the nation ;
 And Mr. B——e, an Ex V——C, one of the deputation,
 Quite paralyzed the Premier by the annunciation :
 That a certain salooner in this very town,
 And a gent with a tail who lives far away down,
 Had concluded a contract, (it wasn't for coals,
 Of these he had plenty), but for human souls ;
 And the traffic in tippling so briskly set in,
 With whiskey and cock-tails, and sherry and gin,
 That 'twas plain the vile commerce was gaining attention
 In a place he could not be expected to mention,
 And to check this satanic and nefarious combination,
 They demanded from the Parliament some needful legisla-
 tion.

IX.

Then up and spoke the other Sam, the chaplain of the body,
 Who crossed the lines from Georgia to hustle out the toddy ;
 He never could, and no man should, at such a time play
 dummy,
 When some of their best citizens were looking rather rummy,
 And went to bed each night, 'twas said, in such a situation—

To "draw it mild," it might be styled, of base intoxication,
That he was sure the only cure was total deprivation,
To save the nation from this state of social degradation.

X.

With hundreds two, and twenty-six of hell-holes called
saloons,

And three-and-twenty aldermen no better than buffoons,
No use for him and Sammy Small to labor night and day
To mend the manners of the town if bar-rooms barred
the way!

The trouble was, in To-ron-to the sinners were too few
To run the business by themselves, church members filed
in too!

'Twas bad enough in any sect, but gracious! just to think
That Methodists, of every class the cream and pick and pink,
Should come to church a-smellin' like a used-up old swill tub,
Just after having a square drink at Cooper's or the Hub!

XI.

Yes! from the pulpit he had smelled 'em down the middle
aisle,

And the way they thought to hide it would make a monkey
smile;

With their cinnamon and cloves and spice, a-chewin' all
the time,

While the organist and choir were a-rendering the hymn!

But, to cap the climax! what he smelled was not the
"whiskey clear,"

He might stomach that, but, oh! to think that Methodists
drank beer!

XII.

Now the good Sir John was death upon all habits of ebriety,
And begged to say, that by the way of something like variety,

And to start a reformation in the habits of society,
 He might give them a lift in this matter of prohibit,
 But by-and-by the Grits so sly would say 'twas he who
 did it.

XIII.

It seemed to him that politics down in Ontario
 Were getting rather muddled up by Oliver and Co.;
 Who, with his Grace's "who" and "which" had whittled
 down the Bible,
 And now, their occupation gone, and scorning to be idle—
 As Satan found some mischief still for idle hands to do—
 They wanted to mix up the whole Dominion in the stew.

XIV.

Now he'd like to know if his friend little O.,
 Who was cock-o'-the-walk in Ontario,
 Couldn't manage the matter by some legal quibble,
 And water the drink as he watered the Bible.

XV.

But, to be serious! in this thing of general prohibition,
 He was very much afraid that Dominion inhibition
 Could hardly interfere with the stomach of the nation;
 Notwithstanding, it was possible he might have power
 to do it,
 And just as probable, he thought, he'd live the day to rue it.

XVI.

But the Prohibition Leaguers and Temperance Crusaders
 Hacked away at the sophistries of good Sir John,
 'Till the Gooderhams and Walkers gave way to soda waters
 And the vivifying article that sparkles in the Don.

XVII.

And a manifesto from Ontario
 Went forth from the council of Premier O.,
 That in future and henceforth,
 From Muskoka to Seaforth,
 Beer and wine and bitter ale,
 Carling's sparkling, Indian pale,
 O'Keefe's XXXX and Copeland's stout
 Should forever get the roue,
 And all the other products of the drowsy-headed hop,
 Should be changed by Act of Parliament for lemonade
 and pop!

XVIII.

And the brewers and distillers were served with caveats;
 The Rheinards and the Cosgraves, the Carlings and
 Labatts,
 And their seven-story mansions, the hogsheads and the vats
 Were all alive and jolly with the scurry of the rats;
 Not a barrel or a bottle of their product could you see,
 Nor a flask of "Isabella" from the Island of Pelee.

XIX.

For Mr. Dexter, the detector, had tracked the liquor down,
 With a warrant for to capture it in country or in town;
 At every store his nostril wide he sent into the air,
 And scented up, as hounds will do, the quarry to its lair.

XX.

And a glow of satisfaction came o'er the Leaguer band,
 To see the spy Misserrimus a-prowling through the land,
 And raiding all the liquor shops from Kingston to Tralee,
 Where Kaiser beer and brandy smash of yore were wont
 to be.

XXI.

And a change came over
 The spirit of the rover
 Who lounged in after dark to McConnell's or the Hub;
 And the gent, who felt so dry
 For a cocktail on the sly,
 Rather missed his little "smile" with his euchre at the club.
 And as he went upon his way, without moistening his clay,
 He pondered on the glories of the days gone by,
 When a fellow might slip in, without deeming it a sin,
 To have a dash of soda in his rye.

XXII.

But those downy days were gone,
 And "tit-willow" was the song
 That cheered him as he sought his habitation drear,
 But he had the consolation
 That the balance of the nation,
 To their utter desolation, had been docked of their beer.

XXIII.

Now having won the battle
 Against the "low-down cattle"
 Called Methodists, who stole to church a-smellin' of their
 beer,
 The Leaguers, great and small,
 To Waterbury Hall,
 Swarmed up to celebrate the triumph of the year.

XXIV.

And the teachers and the preachers
 Who were wont to quaff their beakers
 Of the old October and the flowing Bass,
 Declared that for propriety,
 And the welfare of society,
 They had the moral courage to turn down their glass:

XXV.

But as for the bulk of the nation, they were sure
 For a malady so grievous, Prohibition was the cure ;
 And the President assured them it was patent as the light
 That twenty thousand died last year, and all from getting
 tight.

XXVI.

They had parsons by the dozen, and churches many a score,
 And socials in the parlors, and tea and cake galore ;
 Yet the morals of the people were in a woful plight,
 And the Act of Prohibition was the thing to set them right.

XXVII.

When the preachers and the teachers and the clergymen
 all fail,
 And bow to the supremacy of beer and bitter ale,
 And saloons were too attractive with the billiard ball and
 cue,
 It was plain that in Religion there was some defective screw.

XXVIII.

But now with the assistance of this patent legislation
 They'd so metamorphose the morals of the nation,
 And exhibit in society such a revelation
 That their mothers wouldn't recognize the next generation.

XXIX.

Already the good leaven had begun to do its work,
 And the people were all sober as a Spaniard or a Turk ;
 Not a liquor shop was open in the city of the Queen,
 And the rodents had a holiday where Gooderham's had been.

XXX.

The police were all disbanded, their occupation gone,
 For not a thief or housebreaker was left to "crack" the town ;

And the chief and Col. Denison, promoted to half pay,
Spent all their happy moments in a-curling on the bay.

XXXI.

No more the handsome chariot with its livery was seen,
That trundled the gay visitors to visit Mr. Green ;
That coach and guard and horses had all vanished one by
one,
And so had the hotel upon the heights above the Don.

XXXII.

And such was the magic transformation of the scene,
It seemed a little heaven where the opposite had been,
And the President assured them the Millennium had
set in—

While some thought this a pleasant joke, and said 'twas
"rather thin"—

XXXIII.

For, had they not dried up all the fountains of temptation
That polluted the morals and the stomach of the nation ;
And he thought that they deserved a vote of gratulation,
As the people who accomplished this astounding reformation :

XXXIV.

To wit—the Prohibition Leaguers and Temperance Cru-
saders,
Who had toppled down for evermore the Lagers and the
Kaisers,
So that all the horses of the Queen, and all her merry men,
Couldn't set 'em up on festive board or gorgeous bar again !

XXXV.

The next reformer on the list was the Hon. Mr. Rose,
Who being stunted in his growth got up upon his toes ;

He said there was no reason why reformers should cry
 "Halt!"

Or limit their attention to the "mountain dew" or malt.
 They should stop the growth of barley—of that he was
 quite sure,
 And the hops and vines would follow suit to make a perfect cure.

XXXVI.

He was often fairly puzzled and sorely tried to know
 Why so many alcoholic weeds were authorised to grow,
 Until a grave and learned man, the Rev. Mr. Small,
 Assured him that they were no doubt a relic of the Fall.
 But as long as these pernicious plants that gave out alcohol
 Were allowed to rear their upas heads upon our virgin soil,
 He had no hope that he could cope with such a sore temptation,

Or from the wine-cup and the beer hold off his congregation:

They had been sunk so low, he feared, in social degradation,
 The moral course had lost its force to work out their salvation.

In these palmy days of scholarship 'twas marvellous to think
 That the Bible gave permission for the usage of strong drink;

He'd searched it over many a time from cover unto cover,
 But not a line to warrant it could any man discover.

XXXVII.

But to finish up this glorious and benign reformation
 Which swept like a resistless wave advancing o'er the nation,

There was something more than cocktails that were
 precious to their heart,

From which he was afraid they must be satisfied to part.

XXXVIII.

Amongst the rest the odious weed that outraged all their
 noses,
 A vile and baleful plant that smelled of anything but roses.
 Go where you could, in street or wood, by railway or thro'
 tunnel,
 From every jaw a pipe protrudes, and every mouth's a funnel.
 The Stygian smoke that issued from their Padres and
 their Mahdis
 Rose up, he was convinced, from the neighbourhood of
 Hades;
 And as beer and baccy were akin, together they should go,
 And every pipe should be put out in broad Ontario.

XXXIX.

They'd only reach the halfway house in thorough reformation,
 When they had legislated for the noses of the nation;
 No man could say that Canada from vice and crime was free,
 While every dude could blow his cloud just like an Indian
 Cree.
 'Twas plain this vile and beastly thing of smoking and of
 chewing,
 Unless put down by some strong hand would compass their
 undoing;
 It should be made a criminal, indictable offence
 Against the morals of the people, their noses and their sense.

XL.

And to follow up the work so fitly consummated,
 From the ashes of the League—like a giant renovated,
 The ANTI-BLAST SOCIETY sprang up to run a-muck
 Against the pipe and smoking gear of every bold Canuck,
 And what they did anent the "weed," and how they raised
 a rumpus,
 You may be told another time by your obedient

BUMPUS.